

Message Text

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TO USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 120655 TOSEC 010246

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, FR

SUBJECT:BRIEFING MEMORANDUM - THE SECRETARY'S MEETING
WITH MITTERRAND

DATE: MAY 27, 1975, 6:30 P.M.

PLACE: AMBASSADOR RUSH'S RESIDENCE, PARIS

1. PARTICIPANTS

US FRANCE

THE SECRETARY FRANCOIS MITTERRAND
AMBASSADOR RUSH ROBERT PONTILLON, SOCIALIST
COUNSELOR SONNENFELDT PARTY SECRETARY FOR INTERNA-
ASSISTANT SECRETARY TIONAL AFFAIRS
--HARTMAN (PERHAPS OTHERS)
HERMAN J. COHEN, POL. COUNS,
--PARIS, (NOTETAKER)
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HELEN KAPS, INTERPRETER

2. CHECKLIST

--CSCE: EXPRESS OUR MISGIVINGS ABOUT AN ORGANIZED FOLLOW-UP ON CSCE.

--PORTUGAL: NOTE THAT SOCIALIST PARTY SUPPORT FOR SOARES AND OTHER MODERATE ELEMENTS WOULD BE HELPFUL.

--MBFR AND SALT: INFORM MITTERRAND ABOUT THE STATUS OF THESE NEGOTIATIONS.

3. SETTING

4. MITTERRAND HAS REQUESTED THIS APPOINTMENT AND WOULD LIKE TO DISCUSS CSCE FOLLOW-ON AND PORTUGAL, AND TO ASK ABOUT PROGRESS ON MBFR AND SALT. HE RECENTLY VISITED THE SOVIET UNION AND DISCUSSED THESE AND OTHER SUBJECTS WITH BREZHNEV. MITTERRAND WAS REPORTEDLY "REVOLTED" BY HIS EXPERIENCES IN THE USSR AND CONFIRMED IN HIS CONCLUSION THAT SOVIET-STYLE "SOCIALISM" IS INAPPROPRIATE FOR FRANCE. HE WAS SAID TO BE PARTICULARLY ANNOYED THAT THE SOVIETS REFUSED TO ENDORSE THE COMING TO POWER OF THE UNITED LEFT IN FRANCE. NONETHELESS, MITTERRAND'S VISIT WAS A HELPFUL BOOST BOTH TO HIS IMAGE AND HIS POSITION VIS-A-VIS THE FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY (PCF).

5. IN MEETING WITH YOU, MITTERRAND HOPES PRINCIPALLY TO BOLSTER: (1) HIS INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION; (2) HIS "RESPECTABILITY" WITH THE NON-LEFT SEGMENT OF THE FRENCH ELECTORATE; AND (3) HIS POSITION IN THE CURRENT STRUGGLE WITH HIS COMMUNIST ALLIES.

6. FROM OUR STANDPOINT, THE MEETING IS A USEFUL OPENING TO THE DE FACTO LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION AS WELL AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO BRING OUR FOREIGN POLICY CONCERNS TO THE ATTENTION OF A POLITICAL LEADER IN FREQUENT TOUCH WITH THE EUROPEAN LEFT.

7. SINCE NARROWLY LOSING THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION LAST
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MAY (HAVING RECEIVED 49.2 PERCENT OF THE VOTE), MITTERRAND HAS BEEN GOING THROUGH A PHILOSOPHIC PERIOD AND IS SAID TO BE PESSIMISTIC ABOUT THE FATE OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC LEFT. NEVERTHELESS, MITTERRAND IS UNDERTAKING A MAJOR REDEFINITION OF SOCIALIST PARTY FOREIGN POLICY, HAVING ALREADY RESTRUCTURED THE PARTY AND BROUGHT HIS OWN TEAM INTO UNCONTESTED CONTROL. HE IS, MOREOVER, THE ACKNOWLEDGED LEADER OF THE UNITED LEFT AND RECENT POLLS

SHOW THAT THE SOCIALISTS WOULD RECEIVE TWICE AS MANY VOTES AS THE COMMUNISTS (35 - 17 PERCENT) IF ELECTIONS WERE HELD TODAY.

8. HAL SONNENFELDT HAS INFORMED KOSCIUSKO-MORIZET THAT THIS MEETING WAS AT MITTERRAND'S INITIATIVE AND THAT NO

MORE SIGNIFICANCE SHOULD BE ATTACHED TO IT THAN WAS THE CASE WHEN YOU MET WITH OTHER OPPOSITION LEADERS, SUCH AS WITH MRS. THATCHER LAST MARCH.

9. THE UNITED LEFT

10. AFTER MONTHS OF PUBLIC SQUABBLING BETWEEN THE COMMUNISTS AND SOCIALISTS THE TWO PARTIES HAVE COOLED THEIR POLEMICS SOMEWHAT. HOWEVER, THE RELATIONSHIP CONTINUES TO BE TENSE. THE COMMUNISTS REMAIN CONCERNED THAT (A) THE SOCIALISTS HAVE REPLACED THEM AS THE STRONGEST PARTY OF THE LEFT; (B) THE SOCIALISTS ARE SHOWING A LACK OF ZEAL IN PURSUING THE KIND OF COMMON PROGRAM THE PCF WANTS; AND (C) MITTERRAND REGARDS THE UNITED LEFT AS A TEMPORARY EXPEDIENT AND WILL DISCARD IT AT THE APPROPRIATE MOMENT FOR A CENTER-LEFT ALLIANCE WITH GISCARD. THE SOCIALISTS HAVE REACTED MODERATELY TO COMMUNIST ATTACKS BUT MANY OF THEM ARE DISTURBED BY THE VEHEMENCE OF THESE ASSAULTS AND BY GROWING COMMUNIST SUPPRESSION OF THE SOCIALISTS IN PORTUGAL.

11. THE TWO PARTIES WILL PROBABLY REMAIN IN AN UNEASY, QUARRELSOME ALLIANCE SINCE BOTH ARE DEPENDENT ON CONTINUED COLLABORATION IF THEY ASPIRE TO PRESENT A VIABLE ALTERNATIVE TO GISCARD IN THE LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS IN 1978.

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12. ISSUES/TALKING POINTS

13. CSCE FOLLOW-ON

14. IN HIS MOSCOW MEETINGS, MITTERRAND REPORTEDLY ACCEPTED THE SOVIET VIEW THAT A PERMANENT, FLEXIBLE ORGANIZATION FOR EUROPEAN POLITICAL CONSULTATION SHOULD BE ONE OF THE RESULTS OF A STAGE III SUMMIT.

15. YOUR TALKING POINTS

-- WE QUESTION WHETHER ORGANIZED FOLLOW-UP ON CSCE, WHICH WOULD INCLUDE COVERAGE OF POLITICAL AND SECURITY TOPICS, IS NECESSARY OR DESIRABLE.

-- HOWEVER, WE SUPPORT THE EC-NINE-DANISH PROPOSAL FOR A TWO-YEAR PROBATIONARY PERIOD, FOLLOWED BY A MEETING OF SENIOR OFFICIALS WHO MIGHT DISCUSS FURTHER FOLLOW-UP ARRANGEMENTS.

-- IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, WE AND THE ALLIES COULD LIVE

WITH A SHORTER PROBATIONARY PERIOD AND SOME GENERAL PROVISION FOR OTHER POSSIBLE MEETINGS AS LONG AS THERE IS NO STRONG MANDATE TO CONSIDER POLITICAL AND SECURITY TOPICS.

16. PORTUGAL

17. MITTERRAND HAS MAINTAINED A LOW PROFILE ON EVENTS IN PORTUGAL. WHILE CONCERNED ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS, MITTERRAND APPARENTLY BELIEVES THAT ANY DENUNCIATION OF COMMUNIST TACTICS WOULD BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE FOR SOARES AND WOULD ALSO BE TAKEN POORLY BY MITTERRAND'S OWN COMMUNIST ALLIES. EVEN SO, THE COMMUNIST ROLE IN PORTUGAL HAS ADDED TO RECENT TENSION BETWEEN THE FRENCH COMMUNISTS AND SOCIALISTS BY MAKING SOME OF THE LATTER THINK THEY MAY HAVE ALLIED THEMSELVES WITH A TROJAN HORSE.

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18. MITTERRAND REPORTEDLY RETURNED FROM MOSCOW CONVINCED THAT THE SOVIETS ARE NOT STRONGLY ATTACHED TO CUNHAL, WHOSE LACK OF POLITICAL EXPERTISE AND PERSONAL INTRANSIGENCE THEY CLAIM TO SEE AS A DESTABILIZING FORCE IN EUROPE. HE IS SAID TO BELIEVE THE SOVIETS ARE MORE INTERESTED IN WESTERN EUROPEAN POLITICAL STABILITY THAN IN NATIONAL COMMUNIST GAINS. MITTERRAND DISMISSES PRESS REPORTS OF HEAVY SOVIET FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR CUNHAL AS WILDLY EXAGGERATED.

19. YOUR TALKING POINTS

-- PORTUGAL'S MILITARY LEADERS DO NOT TRUST CIVILIAN POLITICIANS AND THE ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT IS DETERMINED TO HOLD POLITICAL POWER FOR THE INDEFINITE FUTURE.

-- WE BELIEVE THAT THERE IS AN UNDERSTANDABLE TENDENCY TO "OVERINTERPRET" THE RESULTS OF THE APRIL 25 ELECTION AND TO PLACE UNDUE IMPORTANCE ON THE SOCIALIST "VICTORY".

-- IT MUST BE REMEMBERED THAT THE COMMUNISTS LOST WHAT WAS IN EFFECT A PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY; THEIR POLITICAL

INFLUENCE WITH THE AFM RADICALS IS UNDIMINISHED AND THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE IN PORTUGUESE POLICIES OR LEADERSHIP.

-- WE ARE STILL DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE CONTINUED PRESENCE OF COMMUNISTS AND NEUTRALISTS IN THE PORTUGUESE CABINET.

-- TO ENCOURAGE THE FORCES OF POLITICAL MODERATION,

WE WILL CONTINUE OUR PROGRAM OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. WE THINK IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF THE FRENCH SOCIALIST PARTY WOULD ALSO SEEK SIMILAR WAYS OF DEMONSTRATING SUPPORT FOR SOARES AND OTHER MODERATE ELEMENTS.

20. POSSIBLE TRIP TO THE US (IF RAISED BY MITTERRAND)

21. FOR SOME MONTHS, SOCIALIST PARTY OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN PRESSING EMBASSY PARIS TO ARRANGE A TRIP TO THE US FOR
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MITTERRAND. THE SOCIALISTS MAINTAIN THAT MITTERRAND NEEDS A PRETEXT TO COME HERE - ONE POSSIBILITY IS AN INVITATION FROM SOMETHING LIKE THE COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS -- AND THAT HE WOULD EXPECT TO BE RECEIVED BY PRESIDENT FORD AND YOURSELF. WHILE IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO ARRANGE A CFR OR EQUIVALENT INVITATION, OUR EMBASSY HAS ATTEMPTED TO INSERT SOME REALISM INTO SOCIALIST THINKING BY POINTING OUT THAT WE CANNOT GUARANTEE IN ADVANCE THAT THE PRESIDENT OR YOURSELF WOULD BE FREE TO MEET WITH HIM. ACCORDING TO SOCIALIST OFFICIALS, HOWEVER, MITTERRAND WOULD ACCEPT A CFR INVITATION ONLY IF HE WERE ASSURED OF A WHITE HOUSE RECEPTION.

22. YOUR TALKING POINTS

-- I SUGGEST YOU CONTINUE TO STAY IN TOUCH WITH THE EMBASSY REGARDING YOUR PROSPECTIVE TRIP TO THE US.

-- I WOULD HOPE TO MEET WITH YOU IF MY SCHEDULE PERMITS.

CLEARED BY C - MR. DOBBINS INGERSOLL

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